



CHARLOTTE de la Roche de Villeroy



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THE
LETTERS
OF
CHARLOTTE.



THE
LETTERS
OF
CHARLOTTE.
DURING HER CONNEXION
WITH
WERTER.

Grazia sola di su ne vaglia, inanti
Che piu 'l desio d'amore al cor s'invécchj.

VOL. I.

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THE EDITOR'S PREFACE.

I AM happy that in presenting the following letters to the public, I am not exhibiting scenes, or communicating opinions, that can wound delicacy, or pervert sentiment. And though I too well know, that to avoid licentious description, and to reject fashionable ideas, is to wander far from the road that leads to wealth and fame in the literary world, yet I am not willing to acquire either one or the other at the expence of my reader's happiness. If amusement only is to be found in the Letters of Charlotte, it will at least be innocent amusement. If opinions are advanced which may appear uncommon, they will not be found to militate against the precepts of religion. If the mind of the reader is not expanded by additional knowledge, it will not be contracted by the subtleties of scepticism.

Whether these negative recommendations will carry any weight, I know not; but I am sorry to find any book published, in favour of which even these cannot be advanced; and I am still more sorry, that a book so universally read as the Sorrows of Werter, should fall under this predicament; a book which is not simply an apology for the horrible crime of suicide, but in which, as far as the author's abilities would go, it is justified and recommended!

But the author, not satisfied with recommending a specific crime, has aimed a violent blow at all religion. In the language of those men who, if they would, cannot avoid venerating revelation, he says: "I revere our religion; you know I do: I am sensible that it often gives strength to the feeble, and comfort to the afflicted. But has it," he continues, "should it have this effect on all men equally? Consider this vast universe, and you will find millions for whom it never has existed; and millions, whether it is preached to them or

not, for whom it never will exist." This is meant as a pretext for totally rejecting it. Upon the same principle, we might reject almost every thing that Providence affords us. He adds: "What is the destiny of man? To fill up the measure of his sufferings, and drink up the bitter draught."*—Such are the sentiments interwoven in a work intended strongly to affect the mind, and in which the hero is made to act in conformity to these sentiments. The action itself, I should hope, would shew the error and futility of the reasoning; and I will not pass so ill a compliment on the judgment of the reader, as to analyse the passage I have quoted; the sophistry I should think too glaring to mislead a mind not totally destitute of all moral cultivation: and yet I am sorry to say, we have had instances, in which, together with the influence of the example, it has operated to the destruction of individuals, parti-

* See the Sorrows of Werter, Letter LXVIII.

cularly among the other sex, who, from their virtues and attainments, must otherwise have become happy in themselves, and ornamental to society. It would be painful to be particular; but, in support of what I have said, I cannot avoid taking notice of a single fact, well known in the metropolis, that a young and amiable lady who, "rashly ventured on the unknown shore," had the Sorrows of Werter under her pillow when she was found in the sleep of death.

Thus, in a story, a poem, or a fable, the man of genius sends forth the fire-brands of infidelity, and arms his fellow-creatures with despair to anticipate the stroke of death. Pretending to uncommon liberality of sentiment, he discovers the weakness without the virtue, of that monastic superstition which represents the world as a theatre of misery and continual sufferings.* This is not a proper

* The fallacy of this doctrine is exposed with irrefutable argument, conveyed in the captivating

place for me to controvert an opinion, were it worth controverting, which, I trust, every reader knows and feels to be false.

It was very artful in the author, to insinuate, that his hero was "strongly impressed with sentiments of religion." To have obtruded opinions in direct contradiction to these sentiments, without some sophistical allusion to them, would have shocked, instead of converting his readers, to become the disciples of that fell despair which whets the dagger of self-affassination. It is needless for me to observe, that he who is really "impressed with sentiments of religion," will not readily be guilty of any crime, much less of the greatest.

In the Preface to the Sorrows of Werter, we are told, that the author had been called the apologist of suicide, "by those who absurdly ascribe to

form of a vision, and in all the beauty of language, by the RAMBLER, No. 44.

him the erroneous sentiments which he has given to his principal character." Here seems to be a distinction without a difference. If the author gave his hero these sentiments, surely they are his own; and if they are erroneous, be whose they will, why are they published without their antidote? As a translator, the Editor tells us, that, to avoid giving offence, several exceptionable sentiments are omitted. Had the author been influenced by similar motives, the work would never have appeared; at least he might have indulged us with the efforts of his genius, without shocking us with the depravity of his principles. The most extensive evil a man can do, is to publish a bad book.

The letters of Werter having been read with avidity, I am to solicit public indulgence for those of the amiable Charlotte. They commence at the time Werter's commencement, and were written by her to a female friend, with whom she corresponded both before and after the death of Werter. I might say, that the female mind

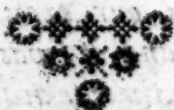
is more given to narrative than to reflection; the letters of Charlotte, however, will not warrant the assertion; they abound with reflections which, if they do not display a brilliant understanding, discover a good heart, susceptible of the most tender impressions, and alive to all the feelings of refined sensibility. The natural cheerfulness of her disposition often gave way to pathetic contemplation; and she is not less communicative of her thoughts than of her conduct.

The regard Charlotte expresses for the English language, in which she was conversant, and for English authors, must naturally be pleasing to an English reader. She quotes our poets, as we quote the ancients; and it was natural she should do so: sentiments acquired through the medium of another language make the strongest impressions on the mind.

It afforded me no small pleasure to find, that in the letters of Charlotte there was nothing to suppress. I give them at large; and wish I could do the same by her fair friend, of whom one cannot but

conceive a high opinion, from the confidence reposed in her by Charlotte, and the great regard she expresses for her correspondence.

I ought to apologize for the length of this Preface; but as apology would only add to prolixity, I forbear. Regardless of my fate as an Editor, I solicit protection and indulgence only for CHARLOTTE.



CHARLOTTE, &c.

LETTER I.*

THE elegant description of your retirement charms me ; but you always sketch with a flattering pencil, and the most captivating colours. You think I can have no objection to so delightful a spot ; and indeed I have but one—it is too far from Walheim. As I sincerely regret your absence, do not neglect, my dear girl, to give me the only consolation in your power—the consolation of your enchanting correspondence. To you it will afford some amusement ; to me it will communicate real happiness.

Why, you are as absolutely buried as if you were in a convent ; but though

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* As the dates of these letters only specified the week days on which they were written, it was thought needless to notice them.

you are thus devoted to solitude, and are become one of her best beloved disciples, you must by no means take the veil. We cannot dispense with your occasional visits. Walheim, believe me, suffers considerably by your absence. Our conversations are become dull, for want of your sprightliness; our evenings long; our dances languid. Adolphus Ferdinand very justly, and very prettily, called you the Euphrosyne of Walheim.

Your raillery, my sweet friend, is out of time. Albert is not here. A melancholy event hath called him hence; the grave receives his father. Albert, overwhelmed with filial grief, pays the last sad duties of filial love; and for a time forgets his Charlotte.

I cannot but lament the death of this good old man. In him Albert found not only an affectionate father, but a sincere friend; one, who, destitute of the peevishness of age remembered that he once was young; one, whose evening sky was illumined by the sun.

shine of cheerfulness, and the beams of religion ; and of all characters, what can be more pleasing than that of a good old man ?

Albert means to settle all his affairs before his return : I do not, therefore, expect to see him this month. Now, as you are so great an advocate for him, and “ would do any thing to accelerate the festival of Hymen,” I think you ought, during his absence, to come and plead his cause ; and by your presence render his absence the less irksome. Adieu ! Present or absent, always believe me to be

Your affectionate

CHARLOTTE.

LETTER II.

YOU forget, my dear Carolina, that I have not much of what you term “ idle time.” You forget that I have the superintendence of a little family ;

and that, in being an eldest sister, I have all the cares of a parent. How, then, can you expect me not only to write frequently, but to write long letters? Besides, I am bound to write to Albert twice a week; and those letters cost me no small trouble, for, in order to improve ourselves in the English language, we have agreed to correspond in no other. So that all my "idle time," as you call it, is devoted to the reading of English books.

I have just had with me several of your admirers, to invite me to a ball next Tuesday. As I know most of the party, and as no exercise can be more charming, I have promised to attend. I hope there is no impropriety in it. Albert, I am sure, will not be displeased; though I am sorry I have not time to acquaint him, and have his answer on the subject.

It has been very warmly, and I dare say, very feelingly asserted by Adolphus Ferdinand, that there can be no dance without you. The language of

lovers, you know, is not to be judged by common rules; this is a sort of poetical licence of Ferdinand's, by which we are to understand that *he* cannot dance without you. If you had a grain of compassion, you would give spirit to our dance, and peace to Ferdinand.

LETTER III.

THE occurrences of a ball, you know, always form a grand article in female correspondence; and you will expect a faithful narrative of all our late proceedings. And, indeed, they are not unworthy of commemoration. Independent of mere amusement, meetings of this kind always afford matter of observation, and exhibit traits in characters discoverable only on such occasions.

Mrs. C. accompanied by her lovely niece, and a gentleman, whose name is WERTER, was so obliging as to give

me a corner in a coach; and though the horizon was gloomy, the good spirits and charming conversation of my companions, rendered the journey very short, and we presently found ourselves in the ball room. Besides our usual set, there were eight or ten strangers, and as they all danced, the room was tolerably well filled.

Much grace was displayed in the minuets, particularly by Frederick, Andran, W. Selftadt, and the gentleman who accompanied us. Your Adolphus and I commenced country dances. The third, I danced with Werter, who does the walse uncommonly well, and was very animated. You know nothing affords me more pleasure than good dancing; and, having a good partner, perhaps I too might be more than ordinarily animated; for in the midst of this dance, our friend Matilda Selftadt significantly pronounced the name of "Albert," which so much excited the curiosity of my partner, and rendered him so im-

portunate, that I at length frankly told him the nature of my connection with Albert.

I am not vain enough to suppose this information had any effect on the spirits of Werter; but from that moment he was perpetually out. I did not know what to think. I was willing to attribute his disorder to the increase of the lightning, which, during the last half hour, had become quite alarming; and the thunder was so loud as to over-power the music. Several ladies quitted the dance; the panic became general; the musicians ceased; and an awful silence succeeded. The mistress of the ceremonies, for so I call Mrs. K. took us into a room, the window-shutters of which prevented us seeing the lightning. Most of the gentlemen went to drinking, and we played at counting.—The morning approached, and we returned home. The scene was truly delightful. We heard the thunder roll afar off; and whilst the sun was rising in the east, a

beautiful rainbow gave splendour to the west. "Ah!" I said, "what magnificent simplicity is here!—what vivid colours in the skies!—what emulation in the fields!—O, Klopstock! who, besides thee, can paint a scene like this?"—The tear started in my eye, and my heart glowed;—but who can describe angelic luxury?—Werter said, "How the splendour of our ball fades away before this!"

Mrs. C. and her niece slept: besides being extremely early and regular in their hours, they were wearied with dancing. I was set down, without disturbing them; and Werter said, he would call in the evening to tell me how they did.

You will not ask me any thing about the dresses of the ladies. A few years ago, indeed, they would have come in for their share of admiration and description: but to notice them now would be irksome to me, and afford no pleasure to you. Simplicity seemed to be the goddess of taste,

which all the ladies had worshipped ; so that there could be little discrimination or distinction where each was adorned with one species of elegance. I have a great opinion of the good sense and taste of those ladies, who are the first to sacrifice the petty distinctions of splendid apparel to elegant neatness—Adieu !

LETTER IV.

I FORGOT in my last to tell you, my dear Carolina, that I had a thousand compliments to deliver to you, for a ball without you, would, you know, necessarily excite much enquiry. Indeed the beaux were very inquisitive. When I told them, that you was hid in the very bosom of retirement, Antonine Frederick said, that confirmed his opinion of your being an angel—"How can you," I said,

“use such common appellations?”—
 “Nay,” replied he, “I am speaking
 as a philosopher, and not as a lover;
 don’t you know,” he added, “that
 one of the ancients has said, no being
 but a brute or an angel can bear absolute
 retirement?”—So you see, my
 dear, you are a philosophical angel,
 and I shall expect not only learned,
 but frequent discourses from you—
 Have compassion on your disciple, and
 write to me soon. Adieu!

LETTER V.

INDEED you have approved yourself a philosopher. Your last letter on retirement shews how well you can enjoy it. And to what an admirable end you can convert it. It certainly requires a portion of philosophic resolution, a mind well stored, and, above all, it requires innocence. Guilt seeks dissipation of thought; whilst retire-

ment is the very nurse of contemplation. But it is not necessary that we should always contemplate. The active virtues of society demand our presence in the world. Retirement is not the business of life ; it is only the scene of preparation, or of relaxation. That religious philosophy, therefore, which taught men to erect monasteries and convents, could not be founded in truth or nature. In hiding ourselves from a possibility of temptation, we may, indeed, avoid many dangers ; but do we not, at the same time, preclude ourselves from innumerable opportunities of receiving and of communicating happiness ? Besides, our leading star lights us on the way : “ *He went about doing good,*” and retired but to pray.

It amounts just to the same thing ; —you spoke of temporary retirement, and, you see, I am on the same side of the question.

Though your aunt, who, you say, is the only rational being in your “ en-

chanted castle," though she is cheerful, you must necessarily pass many hours, which can be appropriated to nothing but reflection: convert your thoughts into epistles, my dear Carolina, for the instruction and amusement of your friend.

LETTER VI.

I CANNOT but laugh, though I am angry, at your raillery against Adolphus Ferdinand; a man whose greatest foible is, his being in love, which makes him guilty of some little extravagancies that you treat severely, though you are the cause of them. You should not complain of him, without having an eye to yourself: you should not censure the effect, without adverting to the cause. Come, you are a strenuous advocate for Albert; and it would be ungenerous in me not to take the part of Ferdinand; though

I think, he is in no great danger; for, if you did not esteem him, you would not write about him.

Ferdinand, you say, is not possessed of those graces of conversation and exterior deportment, by which some others, that you mention, are distinguished. I might ask, are not those others equally destitute of the higher and more amiable accomplishments for which Ferdinand is so universally esteemed?—And are you so avaricious as to desire, and so unreasonable as to expect, every species of perfection in your lover?

The merit of Ferdinand is of the same complexion with that of Albert; and, believe me, my dear girl, it is not for want of abilities that they do not cultivate the graces you allude to: it is, either because they despise them, or because the possession of them is incompatible with higher attainments. There is a frivolity necessarily attached to those acquisitions, that would ill be-

come Ferdinand and Albert. I do not expect in the laurel, the colours of the tulip.

I admire your commending Albert, and, in the same letter, censuring Ferdinand!—If there is any difference, it is in favour of Ferdinand, who, besides a liberal education, has had the advantage of travelling.—And are you really sorry, he did not return a coxcomb?—O Carolina!—but I know you; and I suspect you will laugh at me for seriously animadverting on what perhaps you wrote in jest.

Remember, that, for the future, when you censure Ferdinand, I shall include Albert; thus, what you gain on one side, you will lose on the other—And so, my philosophic censor,—adieu!

LETTER VII.

DO you want another lover, that you enquire so particularly about Wer-

ter;—Female curiosity, to be sure!—
A new character in our little hemis-
phere, like a comet, always attracts
general attention, and excites much
enquiry;—yes, and as many strange
conjectures are formed of one as of the
other.

I have not yet seen enough of Wer-
ter to form any certain idea of his cha-
racter. At present, I can only say,
that he seems to be a man of taste and
sentiment; strongly attached to the
polite arts, and, I dare say, can write
verses, and probably will when he sees
you. His eye is keen, and there is
great expression in his countenance: it
is that kind of expression which indi-
cates a lofty spirit, tempered by the
perpetual operation of a philosophic
judgment.

But it is useless in me to attempt de-
scribing what you will discover at a
first interview, for you must see him,
and that speedily; though, perhaps
you do not know that you are coming
to Walheim. I am sure you love my

father too well, to refuse a request of his; and his request—with many compliments to your aunt and yourself—is, that you will favour him with your company a few days, to superintend our little family, whilst I visit a dying friend—Yes, my dear Carolina, poor Theresa W. whom you have often heard me mention with tenderness, as another Carolina, calls on me to close her dying eyes. Melancholy errand!—but 'tis the voice of friendship:

—As if an angel spoke,
I feel the solemn sound.—

She is abandoned by her physicians, and wishes only to see me. Dear, dear girl! I come, as a dove to its wounded mate—O, that I could bear healing in my wings!"—Adieu, my Carolina! In your prayers remember poor Theresa, the friend of your Charlotte.

LETTER VIII.

YOUR residence at Walheim, gives me great satisfaction, because I know every thing will go on as my father wishes. I found here a shadow of my Theresa—Alas! how wan! I was impatient to see her, and, though she was asleep when I arrived, I stepped softly to her bedside, and kissed her pale hand, that accidentally lay uncovered, as if on purpose to receive me. Disease had robbed her face of all its charms, but delicacy: She looked like a sleeping infant. I sat down by her, and wept. A thousand tender recollections heightened my distress. At length the dear girl awoke, and with an infantile accent said, “Is my Charlotte come yet?” I took hold of her hand—“Thy Charlotte is here,” I said, “Thy own Charlotte that loves thee.” She turned her head,

and, raising it a little, looked wistfully in my face; a faint pleasure glimmered in her blue eyes----“ Indeed, indeed,” she said, “ This is my Charlotte----O Charlotte! you see”---She could say no more; she grasped my hand, and reclining her head on the pillow, her eyes were filled with tears. I kneeled by her; my heart was full; but tears had already given me some relief. “ Do not add strength to your disease,” I said, “ by distressing yourself. Think, Charlotte is with you.” She put my hand to her lips, and kissed it eagerly. I was glad to find she had so much strength. “ Believe me, my dear Theresa,” I added, “ you will be better.” “ Now Charlotte is come,” she said, “ I shall be happy: but I must leave thee, my Charlotte, and thou wilt remember.”---I interrupted her, “ Nay do not talk of leaving me: I am come to stay with thee, and thou wilt be better.”

I had brought with me a phial of

those drops that had afforded my dearest mother great relief in her fatal illness. I gave some to Theresa. She raised her languid head and smiled: "Now Charlotte is the ministring angel," she said, "who knows, yes, this, indeed, will do me good: I feel it will." Her lips did not look so livid, and her cheeks were suffused with a pale pink. She was quite placid, and talked with her accustomed elegance; but with a tremulous voice; of the sweets of friendship, and the power of death, which she said, could not divide the souls that love each other. "Death," she added, "is like an arrow passing through the air; as that occasions a momentary division; so death divides the flame of friendship, but it soon closes again." In this manner she conversed, till weariness brought on sleep.

I hope, and think she is better; but she is of a spirit so calm and so fortified, that it is difficult to know what she suffers. You never knew Theresa

W. but she is worthy of being known, and you shall know her. Tell my father she is better; he loves her.

I am afraid you find the children troublesome; but you love them too well to think so. They will be very good, if you tell him that Charlotte is gone to fetch Theresa. Heaven restore her to them and me!

LETTER IX.

I AM glad, my dear friend, to find that Werter visits my father; and that Ferdinand visits you. Society is the soul of life, and such society I hope, will render your temporary residence at Walheim agreeable.

I am happy to say, that Theresa is better, but not removed from danger, if it may be called danger to be so near Heaven. I do not wonder at your solicitude to know the story of this dear girl; though I am rather surpris-

ed, my father has not told you, for he loves to talk of Theresa. Probably he is too greatly affected with her situation to say much; for though adversity is generally loquacious, grief especially in men, is mostly silent.

The father of my Theresa was an English gentleman and lived at Walheim: an intimacy subsisted between our mother, and the same day gave us birth; but Mrs. W. alas, did not survive the birth of Theresa, and in two years afterwards, Mr. W. died, appointing my father guardian to Theresa, and leaving all his effects in my father's care. The little orphan was removed to our house, and became one of us. It was natural that between Theresa and me the tenderest friendship should arise: "Grow with our growth, and strengthen with our strength." We slept in the same bed; were educated in the same manner; and both my parents regarded Theresa as another Charlotte.

When we grew up, we discovered

a similarity of taste and sentiments which added new joys to our friendship, and rendered it permanent; for friendship not founded on similarity of sentiment, can never be durable; we were pleased with the same books, and delighted with the same music. Our days were spent in the same pursuits, and our evenings concluded with the same diversions.* The happy years rolled swiftly on; and a friendship thus formed, can end only with life; and then alas, "'tis the survivor dies!"

* The connexion between Charlotte and Theresa, naturally reminds one of Shakespear's Rosalind and Cecilia, but more particularly of the friendship of Helena and Hermia so exquisitely described in "Midsummer night's Dream."

We, Hermia, like two artificial gods,
Created with our needles both one flower,
Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion;
Both warbling of one song, both in one key;
As if our hands, our sides, voices and minds
Had been incorporate. So we grew together
Like to a double cherry, seeming parted—

The conduct of my father, during the minority of Theresa, was such as highly endeared him to all who knew under what circumstances she was left. To be the sole guardian of an infant, possessed of unknown property, is a delicate trust. Nothing so soon awakes suspicion and excites scandal: few are the guardians who are not envied by the avaricious, and censured by the malevolent; and orphans, however decently they have been provided for, generally become objects of pity from the supposition, that an uncontrouled guardian cannot resist the temptation of enriching himself by those artifices of fraud, which may be practised without the danger of detection.

My father was aware of this, and on the death of Mr. W. took some reputable people who delivered the property into my father's hands. "All this," he said, "is the property of Theresa, and when sixteen years are elapsed, if providence permit, I will

resign it to her, if not augmented at least nothing diminished." He kept his word. The joint birth-day of our eighteenth year was solemnized with greater pomp than we had been accustomed to; an unusual quantity of company was present, and fortunately among the rest, three of the gentlemen who had assisted my father in removing Theresa's effects. The dear girl and myself, directed to dress with more than even birth-day splendour, were astonished at all this preparation; but after dinner, my father, in the presence of the whole company, delivered Theresa's fortune into her own hands, greatly augmented in value.--- Theresa, who was loveliness itself, arose gracefully from her seat, and was going to thank him on her knee, but my father prevented it, by meeting, and affectionately embracing her: "Thank God?" he said, "I have done my duty. Be as true to thyself as I have been to thee, and be happy, and God for ever bless thee!" Having

pronounced this, with tears, he retired, to indulge those sensations which convey the purest bliss, and mock description. Indeed we all felt a part of it, and the tear of sensibility was in every eye. When my father returned, the glass circulated "to the long life and happiness of Theresa." She arose again, and, after thanking the company, requested my father "to continue her father and guardian; let me, dear Sir, she added, let me continue to enjoy your protection, and the friendship of my dear Charlotte, and do with this treasure, what seems best to yourself." I embraced her, and we retired till the dancing begun. My father gave her a written acknowledgement for the deposit she left in his hands; and thus happily discharged a trust of sixteen years with honour to himself, and advantage to Theresa. Ever since she has lived sometimes in town, and sometimes with us; and happily combines——what seldom are combined——

great discretion and elegant accomplishments.

Conceive then, what I should lose in the death of this amiable girl, and think how her illness distresses me. I blush at the length of this letter ; but narrative is prolix, and, as the Frenchman said, “ I have not time to shorten it,*” Adieu !

LETTER X.

MY dear Theresa is so much recovered, that I shall be at Walheim on Saturday. She kindly ascribes the amendment of her health to my presence. The fact is, that her strength has increased ever since the physicians left her. They either mistook the nature of her complaint, or of her

* Pascal,

constitution. Nature, however, with little assistance, has so far conquered disease, that I rejoice in the thought of seeing her once more at Walheim. What felicity in prospect! To see Theresa embrace my Carolina! and Charlotte made happy by the presence of both! May no dark cloud intercept those white hours!

LETTER XI.

I AM glad you are convinced: I believe nothing but experience would have convinced you, how much my time is taken up. You now know how my days are divided, and that each hour has its stated duty. I thank you again and again for your friendly attentions at Walheim, you have won the heart of my father: he says, you are "another Theresa;" and that,

I assure you, from him, is a very high compliment.

It is too true, my dear Carolina, Werter loves me; and it could not escape your penetration. His perpetual solicitude respecting me, you say, confirmed your opinion. . . I have for some time observed, with sad anxiety, this growing passion. I have observed it in a thousand minute circumstances: it has given rise to a thousand little incidents that more strongly confirm its reality than innumerable protestations. I cannot but esteem him for his delicacy: he knows I am engaged to Albert, and though I see the ardour of his passion, I learn it only from his eyes; his tongue is silent.

Had he not known of my attachment to my dear Albert; my dear Albert, I say, for why should I hide my heart from you? Had he not heard me acknowledge the worth of Albert, and mention him with tenderness—Charlotte, you know, could never hide her heart: then would it

have been criminal in me to have permitted his visits; to have associated and conversed with him on those friendly terms which banish ceremonious restraint, and acknowledge a more than common esteem.

And that I have more than a common esteem for Werter, I do not blush to confess. His taste and sentiments are congenial with my own, his conversation enlightens; and he enters into the spirit of the sciences; he reads Klopstock with feeling, tempered by judgement; and has translated a part of Ossian; for what is better than all, he understands English.* He loves music, and makes himself useful by keeping my harpsichord nicely in tune. Tell me, my dear Carolina, tell me, is there any impropriety

* From this passage, it is plain that Werter, who speaks highly of Ossian in his letters, had Mr. Macpherson's *translation*; and that Germany, as well as Scotland, is a stranger to the *original* *erse*.

in esteeming a man of merit? But do not think I love—No, Albert! my vows are sacred to thee! I have but one heart, it is thine—And though I can love none but thee, surely I may esteem Werter: Though that love only can be pure, which glows for one; yet holy is that friendship which glows for all. Tell me, my Carolina, am I in this to blame?

Your Ferdinand, I will call him your Ferdinand, esteems Werter; and so, I know, will Albert; for he loves the society of men of genius. Adieu! Need I say my father greets you? he does more; he loves you.

LETTER XII.

AH, my dear Carolina! I see my error, and I acknowledge the justice of your remark. An attachment so

sudden and so strong! I see my error, Carolina, but could I see it then; and could I avoid it! whilst I conversed with Werter, the idea of passion never entered my mind. You well know the disposition of your Charlotte, and you will reflect how often we are made happy or miserable by the accidental concurrence of even trivial circumstances: of circumstances that, like small rivulets, derive all their power from casual conjunction. But how could I foresee this?

“When you first discovered the flame in his bosom,” it was then too late to apply your remedy: it was then too late to “throw on the water of cold reserve.” Werter knew the candor of Charlotte, he knew she was incapable of affecting what she did not feel, and to treat with indifference that affection which she could not return. And how could I speak to him on the subject of a passion which he had never declared?

When I discovered the flame in his bosom, and saw it sparkle in his eyes; when his visits became more and more frequent and his conversations were interrupted by involuntary sighs; when I saw him come like a bounding roe over the fields, with all the ardor of youth; and when I saw him return, melancholy and dejected, measuring his pace with funeral steps; then, my Carolina, then I began to tremble: I stood aghast at the innocent mischief I had done: like poor villagers that from a hill behold their cottages in flames, and can only lament their fall; so I regarded the passion of Werter: I saw, but could not relieve. I put confidence in his reason; I opposed the strength of his philosophy to that of his passion, and derived consolation from the great English poet :*

* I imagine Charlotte alludes to the following passage in *Romeo and Juliet* :

These violent delights have violent ends,
And in their triumph die, like fire and powder

"Violent love," he says, "soon evaporates; furious flames quickly expire."

Yes, I see my error: I should not have admitted an intimacy with one so susceptible of the finer feelings: Yet these, alas, were the silken threads that formed the cord of friendship; the unfortunate friendship of Werter and Charlotte! Yet, why unfortunate! let me not "cast the fashion of uncertain evils:" Werter may conquer his passion; Charlotte may lose the lover, and regain the friend; and all may yet be well. May heaven so speed the hours! Adieu!

Which as they meet consume:

Therefore love moderately, long love doth so.

LETTER XIII.

TELL me, my dear friend, are you of the common opinion, that love has not the same influence in this age, it had in that which we call the age of romance? Believe me, I think it has. Human nature, we are told, is the same in all ages; and if so, surely it must, at all times, be actuated by the same passions, and in nearly the same degree.

You will ask me, whether I believe, that a modern gallant would turn knight-errant for his mistress? I answer, that if it was the fashion, he certainly would. There is a fashion for every thing. As manners change, the modes of expressing the passions change with them. It is not so in love only, but in all the passions. Malice and revenge, which heretofore assumed horrible and tremendous forms, now wear different aspects; I mean in what

are called civilized countries. So that though the "outward signs" of the passions are considerably varied, it does not follow, that the passions themselves are extinct; they continue to exhibit themselves as much as ever, but in different shapes.

It is a kind of fashion, nay, I know not whether there is not a natural propensity in us, to depreciate the age in which we happen to live; but I think they go too far, who contend that the nobler passions have not the same influence they ever had, and at the same time affirm, that those of a malignant nature, have gained an ascendancy.--- This does not agree with either fact or reason. I am persuaded, that those who make these unfavourable conclusions, are such as are unwilling to attribute actions to their true motives, and are more studious to discover the agency of malevolence, than to give to others the credit of virtuous principles.

11. Indeed, my dear friend, I doubt not the existence of real and honourable, nay, of romantic love, in as great a degree as ever we read of; that it is frequently counterfeited, I must also admit. You will next ask me, how we are to distinguish the true from the false? But, you know, almost all the poets have answered that question*.

* None of the poets have displayed more happy talents on this subject, than Mrs. BARBAULD; and I cannot resist gratifying the reader of taste with the following very elegant and truly poetic stanzas by that lady, so immediately applicable to Charlotte's observation.

Come here fond youth, whoe'er thou be,
That boasts to love as well as me,
And if thy breast have felt so wide a wound,
Come hither, and thy flame approve;
I'll teach thee what it is to love,
And by what marks true passion may be found.

It is to be all bath'd in tears,
To live upon a smile for years,
To lie whole ages at a beauty's feet;
'To kneel, to languish, and implore,
And still, tho' she disdain, adore;
It is to do all this, and think thy sufferings sweet.

To them I must, therefore, refer you,
as the best philosophers in love. Adieu,
my sweet friend! I sincerely hope

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It is to gaze upon her eyes,
With eager joy and fond surprize,
Yet temper'd with such chaste and awful fear
As wretches feel who wait their doom ;
Nor must one ruder thought presume,
Tho' but in whispers breath'd, to meet her ear.

It is to hope, tho' hope were lost,
Tho' heaven and earth thy passion crost ;
Tho' she were bright as fainted queens above,
And thou the least and meanest swain
That folds his flocks upon the plain,
Yet if thou dar'st not hope, thou dost not love.

It is to quench thy joy in tears,
To nurse strange doubts and groundless fears ;
If pangs of jealousy thou hast not prov'd,
Tho' she were fonder and more true
Than any nymph old poets drew,
Oh, never dream again that thou hast lov'd.

If, when the darling maid is gone,
Thou dost not seek to be alone,
Wrapt in a pleasing trance of tender woe ;

Adolphus Ferdinand will convince you
better than my arguments, that there
are hearts which flame with true devo-
tion to the god of love !

And muse, and fold thy languid arms,
Feeding thy fancy on her charms,
Thou dost not love, for love is nourish'd so.

If any hopes thy bosom share,
But those which love has planted there,
Or any cares but his thy breast enthrall,
Thou never yet his power hast known ;
Love sits on a despotic throne,
And reigns a tyrant, if he reigns at all.

Now if thou art so lost a thing,
Here all thy tender sorrows bring,
And prove whose patience longest can endure ;
We'll strive whose fancy shall be lost
In dreams of fondest passion most,
For if thou hast lov'd, Oh ! never hope a cure.

LETTER XIV.

IT seldom happens that the language of panegyric is just; yet so excellent is your judgment, that I cannot withhold my assent to the character you have drawn of Werter; but, give me leave to tell you, the picture is not finished, and that another dash of the pencil, a dark shade, is wanting to perfect the likeness.

You have seen Werter only with others. Notwithstanding his philosophic reasonings, and the apparent complaisancy of his disposition, he is the very slave of a temper naturally impetuous, and, if I may so express it, rarefied by irritability of nerves, and extreme delicacy, or, at least, peculiarity of taste.

You will, perhaps smile at my idea, that extreme delicacy of taste is injurious to the temper; and you will tell me, that true taste not only refines

the understanding but meliorates the disposition. Much certainly depends on the natural tendency of the temper; and extreme delicacy of taste in one of a synical turn, will by no means diminish a propensity to querulous fastidity: on the contrary, it will add fuel to the flame of intellectual discontent, in proportion as the taste is offended, and the feelings are hurt, by the obtrusions of incongruity, and the absurdities of ignorance.

I cannot call Werter a synic; but his infirmity of temper is augmented by his delicacy of taste, and the most trifling occurrences make lasting impressions on his mind. He has little command over himself; and whilst his natural temper thus overpowers him, how will he stem the torrent of passion? Like the exuberance of his imagination, it will know no bounds: as the one is the source of his most exalted pleasures, so the other, I fear, will prove the cause of his severest afflictions.

LETTER XV.

YOU know how delightful it is to walk on the terrace, under the chefnut trees, and see the setting sun. Our little mansion is at a convenient distance from the village, and its situation on an eminence gives it an air of cheerfulness, unknown to the valley. Werter is charmed with the terrace, and said, last night, if it would not seem odd, he would every evening contemplate the beauties of the valley, and the meandrings of the stream, by the sitting sun. "And why," I said, "will it seem odd? You know your company is always acceptable at the lodge." "Nay," he replied, "I need not tell you why it will seem so. It is a sad thing, Charlotte, that I cannot contemplate the sitting sun, nor the loveliness of those eyes, but that some will regard it as a trespass"—I inter-

rupted him; "see," I said, "how swiftly that solitary bird wings over the wood on our left." "The flock," said Werter, "is gone before; more successful than this, they have found provision for their young, and are returned home richly laden. This too is a parent: unwilling to return without the expected food, she has stopt beyond the minute of departure; for nothing equals the regularity of birds, but the sun they rise with." "And yet," I said, "she cannot be late." "O," he replied, "a minute, in her account, is an age: Consider, Charlotte, the joy of every little family when the flock arrives! what a chirping through the wood! whilst one poor brood hears all, but sees no parent bird: The surrounding joy, and every moment's delay add to their distress. This the parent bird knows; she wings her way with treble haste." "And if," I said, but he interrupted me, and, seizing my hand, exclaimed, "O Charlotte! do not make the cruel sup-

position; if, after a day's absence, I ascend this hill to see the sitting sun, and under these shades found no Charlotte; if hurried away by ruffian hands; O God!" "Do not," I said, "do not subject your imagination to fictitious distress; it is thus you weary your spirits, and not only darken but shorten your days." He sighed, and lifting up his eyes towards heaven; "Alas!" he said, "when I cannot bear to think of the time, when there will be no Charlotte, what days of misery must I count, when—but thou art here, my Charlotte, and I will be composed." "Werter," I replied, "it is ungenerous to distress me thus; you know Charlotte's friendship is"—"It is," said he, "beyond all price: it binds me to the earth, and gives me a foretaste of heaven." "There was a time," I said, "when Charlotte was unknown to Werter; recollect those days, and be happy." "Alas!" he replied, "the recollection of past pleasures, however in-

nocent, makes us melancholy. I never yet felt content so absolute, but that hope flattered me with unknown prospects; and now the paradise, the blooming Eden, is revealed: one moment I feast on celestial delicacies; the landscape shews nothing but perennial brilliancy: it vanishes the next; just as the sun this moment sinks behind the hills, and, like him, leaves a few rays of hope to keep me from despair." "Yes," said I, "but you remember the poet:

Sitting suns shall rise in glory—

And to-morrow, Werter, I shall expect your promised translation of a song of Ossian. It is now time to bid the children good night."

We went, and after kissing the children all round, I played some lively airs on my harpsichord; and, soon after my father came, Werter went away, I thought, in tolerable spirits.

You see, my dear Carolina, you see there is a wild enthusiasm in the friendship and sentiments of Werter, that must subject him to perpetual extremes of happiness or misery. That spark of divinity which animates his frame, resembles one of those glaring meteors that sometimes cross the hemisphere, at once exciting dread and pleasure. I thank heaven, the soul of Albert more resembles a fixed star.

LETTER XVI.

YOU have the advantage of me, Carolina. Your residence in England has made you too learned for me. I could hardly read the English quotation in your last letter: I mean I could not read it with ease: I will, however, read the "Seasons;" though I have heard Albert say, he thought it very difficult to enter into the spirit of that poem. My English reading

has, in a great measure, been confined to the dramatic poets; they are extremely interesting; and, I think, of all modes of writing, dialogue is the easiest to be understood. I begin to relish the Night Thoughts, and so much admire the "Narcissa,"* that I am attempting a translation, with which I intend to surprize Albert on his return.

I wonder you have patience to learn the French; for though it is easy enough, it has nothing to recommend it: neither the strength of the English, nor the delicacy of the Italian; and when one hears it spoken, one would imagine it was but a kind of half language, for there is a perpetual distortion of the body in gesticulation, which seems to be as essential as the words. Werter understands it well enough to point out its peculiar beauties; and I suppose the Cherokee itself has beau-

* Night the Third

ties—but he prefers the language of every other civilized country, except the Dutch, and of their civilization *he* entertains some doubts; you know what a people must be, for *him* to think them civilized. When I first asked him what he thought of the French language? Think!" said he, "why I think, if heaven was suddenly to endue baboons and monkies with the power of articulation, they would instantly jabber French." "And yet," replied I, "you read French." "True," said Werter, "just as I do many other foolish things, because it is the fashion."

"How comes it then," I asked, "that if the language is not intrinsically good, it has become so general? it is the common language of all Europe." "Because," said Werter, "the French have more vanity than all Europe: it is," added he, "that kind of vanity, which, in some countries, is peculiar to quack doctors: they have the assurance to tell you, that no

language is like their's—indeed," said he, "so far I believe them; that their's is the best of all possible languages, and people very good-naturally take their word for it."

And so, my dear Carolina, you are studying the language of "baboons and monkies!" I am surprized that Ferdinand does not persuade you to study my favourite, the Italian. Would it not be more pleasant, think you, to read a sonnet of Petrarch, than an Epigram of Voltaire?

Jesting apart, my dearest friend, let my tongue speak what language it will, the language of my heart is, that I am ever, and affectionately thine.

LETTER XVII.

WALHEIM is once more blessed with the presence of Theresa W.— The dear girl is come! She is come, Carolina, to re-establish her health and to regain her bloom. My father received her with open arms, and the children wearied their *Terey* with kisses.

I have nothing now to disturb my repose, but the too ardent attachment of Werter. I wish Providence would so ordain it, that the charms of Theresa may influence Werter, as those of Carolina do Ferdinand.

To complete our felicity, cannot you pass a week at Walheim? We are to have another ball the next month; and must I again prove a poor substitute for Carolina, and join the dance with Ferdinand? For, by that time, Theresa, I hope, will be

able to accompany us, and, of course,
I shall contrive that Werter shall be
chiefly engaged with her.

Theresa, since her arrival here, has
found a tenth muse in *Hygeia*, the god-
dess of health. And the following
are her effusions :

O shades of Walheim ! and ye streams that give
Melodious murmurs to the passing gale,
Once more I breathe among your healthy groves,
Once more I drink the music of the vale.

Hygeia ! goddess of the smiling hours !
Daughter of temp'rance and of chaste desire !
To thee once more I lift the cheerful eye,
To thee once more I strike the sylvan lyre.

Dost thou not dwell 'mong Walheim's blessed
shades ?

Dost thou not wander in her happy vale ?
Thy beaming face I see in orient morn,
I feel thy kisses in the summer's gale.

I hear thee in the sprightly song of birds,
And in the mid-day humming of the bee ;
Thou can'st not breathe, but sweetest music plays
'Mong bending corn, and in the waving tree,

Give me—O goddess of the smiling hours,
With thee to dwell in Walheim's peaceful
groves,

With thee to wander o'er her shady hills,
With thee repose me in her green alcoves.

With grateful feeling glows my cheerful heart,
Warm'd with return of thy all-sacred fire;
To thee I dedicate this humble verse,
Daughter of temperance and of chaste desire!

O shades of Walheim! and ye streams that give
Melodious murmurs to the passing gale;
Once more I breathe among your healthy groves,
Once more I drink the music of the vale.

I expect these verses to have no
small influence with Werter, I assure
you. Adieu!

LETTER XVIII.

FOR your generous sentiments, a
thousand thanks! The good opinion
of my dear Carolina, makes me hap-
py: and I trust my conduct will al-
ways be such as to merit a continuation

of that friendly intercourse which is to me

A perpetual feast of nectar'd sweets,
Where no crude surfeit reigns.

I *will* be watchful over my heart—your advice is engraved there—and what shall erase the image of Albert? Need I blush, to say this to my Carolina? Your letter must be my apology, wherein you bid me “beware of my heart.” Why should I play the hypocrite, and with Carolina too? My heart is Albert’s. Of course, what you call the “old emblem of the moth and flame,” applies not to me. Need I dread the fire when my wings are gone? Be candid, Carolina, and tell me,—has Ferdinand burnt *your* wings? How say you:—wings or no wings?

LETTER XIX.

“JUST touched the flame, and likely to grow again!”—I am glad, however, you cannot fly; Shall I tell Ferdinand, that you are half *wingless*?

The two strangers have met; Werter and Theresa are mutually pleased with each other; there is already that very friendship between them which I wished to have subsisted between Werter and myself: they are, as it were, brother and sister. That delightful intercourse of sentiment, that sympathy of taste, that delicate sensibility, which displays all the blossoms of friendship, unmixed with the thorns of passion. This, my Carolina, is the happy lot of Werter and Theresa.*

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* It is rather extraordinary that this lady is not mentioned in Werter's letters; but Charlotte

Ah, Werter! why must the blossom of *our* friendship wither with the heat of too warm a sun? O, call to its aid the dews of reason; the showers of philosophy; or, if it must be so, drown it in the waters of oblivion?

O, my Carolina! his eyes have too, too much expression. Without his saying even a "civil thing," Theresa discovered all. Will Albert read, with *such* discrimination, the sad contents of Werter's countenance? My Carolina! what is to be done?

Theresa advised me, as you did, to treat him with great coldness—I did so—and the consequence was, so much extravagance of action, such incoherent conversations, such dejection, that it attracted my father's attention, who very seriously told me, that "he thought Werter had read a little too much of the *Greek book* which he calls

engrossed all his serious thoughts—all his literary attention.

his pocket companion ;” meaning Homer, which Werter always carries about him. Even the children remarked it, and complained, that “ Werter did not build houses of cards, nor romp with them on the floor.” This was just as I expected : Carolina and Theresa are strangers to the disposition and temper of Werter. I was afraid to repeat the experiment ; and it may seem vanity in me to say, that I dreaded more fatal consequences ; but the impetuosity of Werter’s temper, the wildness of his eye, the distraction of soul, which he endeavoured to hide—O my dear friend !—

Theresa too was alarmed. I was, in some measure, obliged to follow her advice, as she might have attributed my neglect of it to a wrong motive ; but acquitting me of all improper attachment, she requested I would resume the smile of friendship, and treat Werter in my accustomed manner. Perhaps I over-acted my

part :* for the next time Werter went away, he repeated two lines of our favourite English poet :†

My gloom is scatter'd, sprightly spirits flow,
Tho' wither'd is my vine, and harp unstrung.

Again, my Carolina! what is to be done? Is there no such thing as lasting bliss, and is not innocence secure from misery? Alas, I fear not! devouring tempests and gentle rains descend on all alike.

* This seems to have given occasion to Werter's nineteenth letter, in which he says, "She loves me!"

† Young.

LETTER XX.

NO! I by no means think it “in-
delicate” in you to contend against
the existence of Platonic friendship:
it is mere matter of opinion. But
against your opinion, I bring a fact;
I produce my vouchers—Werter and
Theresa. There is Platonic friendship
in the strictest sense. But you will,
perhaps, ask me, will it continue such?
Will not Albert’s presence—Ah! my
dear friend, do not flatter me with ideal
peace. Can Werter’s presence make
me forget Albert? Will not my esteem
remain for Werter when Albert comes?
In Albert’s presence will Werter’s
flame expire?

If the friendship which I envy would
terminate in love, I should indeed be
happy. But I fear my Carolina pro-
phesies in vain.

Respecting Platonics, I admire your
candour, though I do not subscribe to

your creed. Possibly I may be mistaken; I may have too high an opinion of human nature. We all believe, that angelic intercourse is intellectual; and we all know and feel, that our most supreme felicity originates in *mind*; that our affections are stronger in proportion as they are refined, and are refined in proportion to the cultivation of our intellectual faculties. And why may not minds be so cultivated, and so rapt, as it were, in the exercise and contemplation of their own powers, as to hold an independent intercourse? I do not say this is common. I contend only for the possibility of its existence. Holy men hold converse with heaven: they have a spiritual intercourse with the "Father of lights;" yet holy men are mortal.

But this you will call a summer evening's reverie. Be it so: I love to indulge myself in such reveries as impress on my mind a favourable idea of human nature, which makes me respect mankind and myself; and so long as

these impressions remain, I cannot easily be led to do any thing unbecoming the duty and the dignity of a rational being.

My last letter from Albert informs me, that he has settled his father's affairs; has great hope of succeeding in his application to the minister, and that he shall soon be able to fix the day for his return to Walheim. My dear Carolina, adieu!

LETTER XXI.

TRANQUILITY reigns at Walheim. My days pass pleasantly; the presence of my Theresa gives me great consolation. To be fully employed in domestic scenes, and to enjoy the communication of such a mind as Theresa's—this is the source of my felicity. It recalls to my memory those days of happiness, when my dear mother blessed this mansion—she that was at once my parent, guide, instructor, friend.

Werter was here yesterday, and in the evening we walked under the lime-trees. Theresa has recovered all her sprightliness, and was jocular at the expence of Werter, by pretending to have discovered that he is in love, by certain poetical signs; and asked what maid of the village had been able to captivate the philosophic Werter?

“Nay,” said he, “I shall not pretend to deny that I am in love: be-

cause I would not pay so ill a compliment to your judgement. But if, my dear Theresa," added he, "these signs were not visible before you came to Walheim, I leave you to guess whose chains I wear." Theresa blushed—"There, Theresa," said I, "you see what it is to accuse philosophy of so much weakness." "Yes," she replied, "Minerva scorns the darts of Cupid." "Not so," said Werter, "she sometimes assists the little god, and, because he is blind, directs his arrows to the proper objects. But," he continued, "every attachment accompanied by reciprocal civility, now receives the appellation of love; either because there is little real affection subsisting, or because people cannot, perhaps will not, distinguish love from friendship." "I remember a lady, Sir," said Theresa, "whose sentiments I had great reason to admire, who contended, that there actually was not any distinction; and I wish I could also remember her

argument to prove it." "For my part," I said, "I have not turned my thoughts to the subject, but," I added, laughing, "you know I am very learned, and can read English poetry: the English poets, you know, are philosophers, and one of them* decides the matter in a single line—

"True love and friendship are the same."

"I should be extremely happy," said Werter, looking at me, "if that were the fact. But, my dear friend, you must recollect the circumstance that gave rise to your quotation. The poet's mistress had promised him her friendship, and, to augment his happiness, he adduces your argument, which he found excellent in theory, but false in fact; for I never learnt that he could persuade her into the same opinion."

"I know not," replied Theresa, "what may be the sentiments of poets and philosophers; but I feel I love my friends, and I cannot separate the ideas

* Thompson.

of love and friendship : be so good, Sir," added she, " as to favour me with the line of distinction." " Answer my questions candidly," said Werter, " and I have a solution at hand. Either I deceive myself, or I am honoured with your friendship." " Certainly." " And yet," he said, " according to your account, that cannot be, unless you are in love with me." " In love !" replied Theresa, colouring, " I have, indeed, a sisterly affection." " And what is that," said he, " but the truest friendship ? for that, a thousand thanks, my dear Theresa. This friendship, however, he continued, originates in similarity of sentiment ; in a reciprocation of good opinion, and is independent of passion. Though it adds charms to existence, yet existence is to be borne without it. But you may one day feel an attachment which will render existence miserable, except in the presence of a particular object"—" I suppose, sir," said Theresa, interrupting Werter, " I sup-

pose, Sir, you speak from experience ; otherwise I may fairly oppose theory to theory ; and we may contend without a possibility of conviction.'—There are few women,' replied Werter, 'to whom I would acknowledge myself to have been the slave of that passion, though it is the ' noblest and the best.' It is a subject on which they can never be serious, but when they are under it's influence. I have to good an opinion of Theresa's candour, to suppose her desirous of any confession to confirm my opinion.'—We were at that instant joined by your Ferdinand, to whom we referred the question in debate. I need not tell you his manner—'Difference between love and friendship!' said he, 'just the same difference there is between fruit and blossoms.'—'Exactly!' resumed Werter, 'we are contented with contemplating the one, and cannot help devouring the other.'

'It is in vain, I said, to put the question to a vote, where there is an

equal division; but if Carolina were here'—'O, then, said Ferdinand, 'I should be a true advocate, and change sides for the sake of better fees.'—

So pass our evening walks. Theresa has brought a quantity of new music; and her melodious voice again gives cheerfulness to Walheim.

And why, my dear Carolina, why will you not personally join this little band of friends? Theresa longs to embrace you; and Werter teizes Ferdinand, by telling him, that you will certainly be the most domestic wife in the world; for, says he, you see, neither friendship, love, nor music can draw her from home!—How can you withstand such mighty powers as these?

LETTER XXII.

SPELLS, and preternatural powers! — So you have converted solitude into an enchantress, by whose magic you are bound to your lonely castle! Theresa and I will come, and drive the forcerefs forth, and set you free, if we find her power too potent against your own efforts. For my part, I have provided an English incantation, which, as it was penned by the greatest magician that ever called ‘spirits from the vasty deep,’ I expect will be very powerful: and thus it runs:*

‘ Let me conjure you, by the rights
 ‘ of our fellowship, by the consonancy
 ‘ of our youth, by the obligation of
 ‘ our ever-persevered love, and by
 ‘ what more dear, a better proposer
 ‘ could charge you withal,’ — fly to
 Walheim.

* Hamlet.

If this will not do, I shall have recourse to another expedient. There resides in this neighbourhood a great magician, whom I will oppose to your enchantress, and I shall be wofully deceived if he does not break her wand, and dissolve the charm. You may have heard of him—his name is Adolphus Ferdinand.—So look to it!

LETTER XXIII.

I AM glad you think of coming to the ball; I am likewise glad there is to be a ball. Albert will be here; and novelty may attract Werter.—Yes, my dear Carolina, Albert is on his way to Walheim. The presence of Theresa will be a vast relief to me, without which I should be at a loss to know what to do; for, alas! I have a new lesson to teach my heart. It must not appear to Albert, that I know any thing of the passion of Werter; and I hope it will escape Albert's attention. Indeed, indeed, my Carolina, strange sensations arise in my bosom: I wish, yet tremble, to see Albert!—

A gentleman came from the town yesterday on business to Theresa; and, as he staid late, Werter and I walked under the thick chestnut trees, and my father joined us, on his return from the town, where he had been a few days.

‘Charlotte,’ he said, ‘there is a friend of yours on the way to Walheim, and means to visit you speedily.’ ‘Dear sir,’ I replied, ‘who is it?’ ‘Need I tell you?’ he said, ‘Albert.’ Leaning on Werter’s arm, I perceived him to be agitated, and looking in his face, I saw he was pale. I was glad my father did not notice it; but he went forward, saying, ‘I suppose I shall find a house-keeper—my little Spaniard,’ so he frequently calls Theresa, whose mother was a Spanish gentlewoman of good family.

The moon was just beginning to rise, and I said to Werter, ‘Let us follow my father.’—O Charlotte! he replied, ‘what shall now become of Werter? I respect Albert, because he loves you; but the idea of his approach chills me. I cannot think of entering the house again: I am too much agitated. And must I then lose this heavenly intercourse? Must I no more see Charlotte? No more pour out my soul before her, and receive comfort from her smiles?’

Shall I not learn to regulate my spirit by her serenity? And must I wander through the world destitute of light—for without Charlotte all is darkness.

I replied, 'These are words, Werter, which I did not expect to hear from you, and I know not how to answer them. Indeed, Werter, you distress me. You must either accept my friendship on such terms as heaven may afford, or'—'Spare,' he cried, 'spare the cruel word. O Charlotte! can any thing equal the thought of separation? I could die, my Charlotte—nay, and'—I interrupted him—'Alas, Werter,' I said, 'I have been to blame to encourage a friendship so prejudicial to the peace of both. But friendship is the child of peace, and Werter's passion murders the innocent offspring of unoffending sympathy. Do not,' I added, 'anticipate the sorrows that may never come: I respect you, Werter,—take this hand, Werter, nay, bathe it not with tears, and let me intreat you, I value your friendship, let

me prevail on you, if not for your own, at least for my peace, forbear a language, which, however it may distress me, I cannot; I must not regard: will Werter let Charlotte ask in vain? 'O Charlotte!' he said, 'your goodness overwhelms me; I will endeavour to be happy: indeed I ought to be when Charlotte is my friend.'— 'Charlotte,' I replied, 'will always be the friend of Werter, whilst Werter is friendly to the peace of Charlotte.'

He was a good deal composed, and I knew that by diverting his attention to some peculiar object, his mind would become serene. 'How beautifully,' I said, 'do the moon-beams dance on the waters!'— 'But the waters,' he replied, 'are ruffled: so Charlotte's goodness plays upon my heart, and'— 'Why Werter, I said, why will you let fond imagination destroy your peace? Is this becoming *Werter*? Werter, whose mind should be calmed by the superiority of its powers? or does philosophy

aid passion? and must Werter envy the peace that dwells in yon miserable huts, where one sees glimmering lights over the hills? Come, Werter, I added, let not poor hinds instruct us to be happy : let us join the domestic circle, and seek felicity in the bosom of friendship—believe me, I said, we shall find it there.’ ‘Alas! he replied, where shall Werter find felicity, but in Charlotte’s friendship? and Albert’—‘Albert,’ I said, ‘will esteem the friends of Charlotte, and is not Werter one?’

As we returned, I endeavoured to convince Werter of the advantages he would derive from the friendship of a good and liberal minded man, who was happy in joining a knowledge of the world, with a love of retirement, and whose judgment was never warped by passion. ‘Yes,’ he replied, smiling, ‘an excellent contrast to me, who despise the world, and never discovered any judgment but in loving Charlotte.’ ‘Nay,’ I said, ‘I dare say your judgment had nothing to do in the matter :

love, you know, is involuntary.'—

'My affection, I grant you,' he said, 'was involuntary; but it was reason that riveted the chain.' 'The chain of friendship,' said I, 'for what has reason to do with passion?'

I foresaw this would have been a long argument, but we were now at the door, and he was for returning home: 'Come,' I said, 'one song from Theresa.' 'Let it be plaintive; let it be heavenly;' said he, 'let it lead me, as you do, from the earth.'

Thus, you see, my dearest Carolina, my days of trial are hastening on. The return of my dear Albert; but who shall drink from the cup of joy unmixed? The beverage is immortal, and none but angels taste it.

LETTER XXIV.

HE is come, my dear friend! Albert is come, and I am happy! Werter has seen, and esteems him. Nor is the esteem lost: Albert returns it, and regards Werter as a man whose taste can be surpassed only by his eccentricity. Rejoice, my dear girl, for your Charlotte is happy. We want nothing but Carolina, to enjoy every pleasure which can be communicated by friendship, music and retirement.

Albert has not only paid the last duties to his father, and settled all his affairs, but he has also been successful in his application at court; and though the place he has obtained is not so lucrative as had been expected, fortunately it requires no attendance to prevent his remaining here.

You would have laughed to have seen how Albert was puzzled what to make of Werter, from the descriptions

given by my father and Theresa. When he enquired, whether we had any new visitants? 'O yes,' said my father, 'there is Werter, a lover of Theresa's.' 'Of mine, Sir!' said Theresa. 'Why, to be sure,' replied my father, 'for, before you came, he was not here above three times a week; and now, when is he away?' 'And what is he?' Albert asked. 'Heaven knows!' answered my father, 'but sometimes, I think he is mad.' 'Mad!' cried Theresa, do you think, Sir, he is mad because, as you say, he is a lover of mine?' 'No, no,' said my father, 'I rather think his pocket companion, as he calls his Greek book, has had the most influence'---'O, then,' Albert said, 'much learning hath made him mad.' 'My dear Sir,' said Theresa, 'it is no such thing: Werter is a man of genius.' 'Yes!' exclaimed my father, 'he has a very pretty genius at building houses of cards for the children, and rambling in the woods when he should be in bed. To be sure he

tunes Charlotte's harpsichord; and that, added my father, 'is the only thing he does like other people.' 'Why now, Albert,' said Theresa, 'I assure you, Werter is a man of extraordinary taste.' 'Very extraordinary indeed!' interrupted my father, 'he has a very extraordinary taste in making speeches, and, rather than be out of practice, I caught him one day making a speech to a pear-tree!' 'To a pear-tree!' said Albert, 'what could he say to a pear-tree?' 'Nay,' replied my father, 'I suppose it was Greek; I walked on, and would not interrupt him.' 'Well,' said Albert, 'I cannot tell what to make of him.' 'O,' my father said, 'the day will not pass without your seeing him, and then I'll ask your opinion, whether he is mad or not!'

When my father had left table, for this was at dinner, we explained to Albert the character of Werter, who

* See Werter, Letter xxxiv.

came in the evening, and my father was astonished to hear him and Albert converse on subjects which my father was fully persuaded Werter knew nothing about ; and when he was gone, my father said, ' Take away his pocket companion, and don't let him see Theresa, and I believe Werter might do something.'

This mutual harmony of Werter and Albert, gives me great comfort ; and I hope the passion of Werter will subside into a friendship which I shall always regard as a source of intellectual pleasure. Once more, my dear Carolina, I can conclude my letter with a cheerful heart ; and once more write Adieu ! without any sigh but for your absence.

LETTER XXV.

I AM afraid, my dear Carolina must have discovered in some of my late letters an appearance of vanity. But you will recollect that they are chiefly narrative. In relating what has passed between Werter and myself, I could not avoid giving you his own words; and little regard is to be paid to the language of passion, whether of love or anger. You see, my dear, how nearly abuse and compliment are allied: so nearly, that sometimes one is mistaken for the other.

I should find myself extremely at a loss to give verbally an account of the circumstances which I communicate to you by letter. But in a confidential correspondence, and especially with my Carolina, I can lay open my heart, and reveal all its weaknesses.

I have always regarded letters as a sort of proxies, sometimes instruct-

ed to deliver such sentiments as one could not freely communicate otherwise.

Some very grave, and some very light people, look on a correspondence of this kind as very silly. The contents of the correspondence may frequently be silly enough; but the practice is not the worse for that; like every thing else, it may sometimes be abused. To put our thoughts in writing, and habituate ourselves to give them language, will soon enable us to do it with facility; and, surely, that is an accomplishment well worth cultivation.

But this is not the only advantage resulting from a confidential correspondence. If we made it a rule to give an account of our actions it might be one way of preventing some from doing things which they would be ashamed to acknowledge. Hence, the vast importance in our choice of friends: virtue, as well as vice, is strengthened by connexion; example comes directly

home, and has its full influence on the mind. Those, therefore, who contend against the confidential correspondence of virtuous friends, would prevent their progress in a necessary accomplishment, and deprive them of one of the guards of virtue.

Believe me, my dear Carolina, I regard your friendship as one of the chief blessings of my life; and the communication of your sentiments, as one of my most exalted pleasures. The hemisphere of my friendship is very small; I look on you as no less than the sun in it: and all your letters as rays, conveying light and comfort to your Charlotte.—Adieu.

LETTER XXVI.

YOUR Adolphus, yesterday, favored us with a visit. The conversation accidentally turned on the education of women. Poor Theresa and myself were almost beaten out of the field of contention. My father enumerated several instances of female indiscretion and ruin, which he called the natural consequences of elegant accomplishments. I observe, that the aged, in general, have this strange prejudice against female education being carried beyond the common extent. It is not difficult to account for this: most women who have a turn for mental acquisition, are apt to neglect the more common, and consequently, the more useful pursuits of life; and people do not judge, and form their opinion of us, from what we know, but from what we do. Those parents may well declaim against a refined education,

who find themselves and their commands disregarded, and their opinions treated with contempt or ridicule, by their children. Nothing is more universally shunned than what is called a learned woman; as if learning, so far from being ornamental, were actually a disgrace to the sex. It is simply the misapplication of it: a woman may, if she pleases, be very learned without being ridiculous. I will fairly own, however, that there are not so many women rendered amiable as ridiculous by learning, at least in this country. But this is owing to literary attainments being uncommon among us. To find ourselves possessed of superiority in any accomplishment, especially of the mind, is apt to make us vain, and vanity never fails to make us ridiculous.

Whilst my father argued seriously, Albert, Werter, and Ferdinand jocularly supported him. Theresa did not fail to remind the gentlemen, that all they had said applied just as strongly against

themselves. For, said Theresa, 'can any thing in nature be more ridiculous than a learned man, with all his whims, prejudices and odd notions about him! I have read of few, who, with all their knowledge, were not the mere slaves of system: so that there,' added she, 'I think we have the advantage; women, in general, are too volatile to be systematic; I will not take the advantage of saying, that their minds are not sufficiently contracted to be systematic; for, in my idea, all sentimental system implies a certain degree of contraction.'—Albert would not allow of this conclusion; he called system the helm of science, and gave us a metaphorical discussion on the subject, in which he displayed more ingenuity than I expected.

I think there is great propriety in giving to our sex every possible advantage resulting from education. It must be recollected that, as we are precluded joining in the common business of life, we must necessarily pass many hours a

lone : many of our domestic employments are such as not to require much attention ; and many hours we are obliged to pass without any peculiar object of pursuit. The mind is the most active of all principles ; it must be employed ; and surely it is of the utmost consequence that it be employed on proper objects : on objects which education only can supply ; and the more extensive the education, the more inexhaustible the source of contemplation.

It is generally allowed, that there is in human nature, a propensity to evil ; that the mind not occupied in virtuous, will be employed on vicious pursuit. And hence it is, that vice is generally the daughter of idleness. Viewed in this light, a scientific education seems more essentially necessary to women than to men, their sphere of action being confined to the domestic duties, which presently becoming an almost mechanical routine, leave the mind at liberty to indulge itself in sci-

entific or rational enquiry, or in the reveries of fancy.

The idea, therefore, that the possession of any accomplishment can tend to weaken a virtuous principle is extremely erroneous. Singing, dancing, playing, exhilarate and expand the mind: they are the most innocent and the most delightful of all our pleasures, and

Where virtue is, these are most virtuous.

That they are too frequently perverted is too true; but that is no argument against their excellence; for is not every blessing liable to abuse?

As ignorance is a principal source of vice, so knowledge is a principal source of virtue. Let us, then, my Carolina, endeavour to contribute to the happiness of each other, by furnishing ourselves with such ideas as may expand the mind, and strengthen the habits of virtue. Continue, my dear girl, to make your Charlotte wiser and better;

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for one, I hope, will be the natural
consequence of the other, by communi-
cating those sentiments, for which I so
much admire and love you. Adieu!

LETTER XXVII.

IF I did not love my Carolina, could I excuse that excess of praise she bestowed on me in her last letter?—But I do love her, and I do excuse it. The extreme partialities of friendship, tho' founded on error, should never be regarded as the effusions of flattery, but as proofs of affection: thus, what too frequently excites vanity, would strengthen esteem.

I know, my Carolina, you will not write what you do not think: and yet, I am not vain of your eulogium: for though your heart dictates, it is not because I deserve such praise, but because you love me as I do you—dearly.

I am glad, however, to find that your sentiments on epistolary correspondence agree with my own. The affectation of what is called ease in writing, disgusts me extremely: indeed,

more than the solemnity of pedantry ; as I prefer formality in dress to downright carelessness. Yet this chit-chat way of writing is much in vogue ; and this coxcomical kind of negligence is greatly admired by those who write more for the sake of shewing their wit (like people laughing to shew their teeth), than from the impulse of feeling, or any other laudable motive.

I love your mode of writing letters : they resemble yourself—simply elegant and friendly. When I receive a letter from you, I ~~like it, and say,~~ ^{think} ' This is my Carolina in miniature.'

Werter would write, nay does write, charmingly ; but his imagination gets the better of his judgment, and involves him in description fit only for poetical enthusiasm. The imagination and the taste of Werter would have ranked him among our first poets ; but his fancy led him to drawing : and, it must be confessed that he imitates nature with much success, and selects his objects with happy judgment. But I

hear him below, and I must abruptly bid you adieu!—I believe there is a fatality in it: he generally comes when I am writing about him. Again adieu!

LETTER XXVIII.

WERTER, yesterday, commenced his pilgrimage into the mountains. I believe he makes these pilgrimages, as he calls them, about once a quarter. He is an enthusiastic admirer of nature. To ascend lofty mountains, and behold the rising sun; to wander in unfrequented woods; to hear the distant cataract:—these are the supreme pleasures of Werter; pleasures which indicate an expanded mind, and a taste unvitiated.

Indeed, prospects of this kind, naturally induce elevated contemplation. To see, as it were, all creation before our eyes, cannot but excite magnificent ideas, and lead the mind to an immediate love and veneration of 'the first good, first perfect, and first fair!'—Then it is, that we cannot avoid contemplating his goodness and power: every object charms and convinces.

And, then, my dear Carolina, how sublimely wonderful, how pleasingly awful is it to recollect, that all this profusion of excellence and beauty, this divine union of order and magnificence, sprung from darkness and confusion !

Ere the rising sun
Shone o'er the deep, or mid the vault of night
The moon her silver lamp suspended ; ere
The vales with springs were water'd ; or with
groves
Of oak or pine the ancient hills were covered :
Then the great spirit, whom his works adore,
Within his own deep essence view'd the forms,
The forms eternal, of created things,
The radiant sun, the moon's nocturnal lamp,
The mountains and the streams, the ample stores
Of earth, of heaven, of nature—

What pity is it, that considerations like these do not perpetually operate on the human mind to deter us from the paths of folly !—Compared with such as these, how all other objects shrink into insignificance !

It is thus, that the mind of Werter has been elevated. To all that is excellent in art; to the communications of philosophy, and the enthusiasm of poetry, he adds an intimate acquaintance with the wonders of creation; a species of knowledge which never fails to eradicate vanity.

So far from being vain, Werter, I think, entertains too humble an opinion of human nature: an opinion dangerous to inculcate, as it may tend to make us despise ourselves, and, consequently, render us, in some degree, inattentive to our conduct, or, at least, not sufficiently solicitous to obtain the good opinion of our fellow-creatures.

A still more dangerous consequence resulting from this idea, is, that, regarding ourselves as dust in the scale of existence, we may be induced to think ourselves unworthy the peculiar protection of Providence: of him

Who all things form'd, and form'd them all for
man.

Indeed, we cannot give way to such opinions, without drawing conclusions too shocking to mention. They who entertain ideas so gloomy, and who fancy themselves too insignificant to merit the attention of him, by whose breath they were called into being, should recollect, that as nothing was created without his special interposition, so nothing can exist without his special protection, or cease to exist without his special concurrence.

In almost every thing eccentric, Werter's ideas on many subjects soar to a pitch of extravagance that sometimes involves him in contradiction. And this is not surprising. So limited is our view, even of terrestrial objects; so unable are we to account for the most common operations of nature, that when we attempt to speak of mind; it is no wonder we always discover the most childish ignorance: and that the conclusions of our philosophy are often contradictory to common sense.

Thus, turn which way we will, we cannot but discover our dependence on a ruling power, and the necessity of securing his love as well as his protection.

It is the pride of modern philosophy at once to exalt and to degrade the human species: at once to prove the unlimited extent of the powers of intellect, and to contend for their limited duration; and that sophism is the most universally admired, and those philosophers, as they are erroneously called, the most universally esteemed, whose chief aim is to make us believe the grossest absurdities, and to contradict our own feelings; to divide reason and common sense; to give the passions an unlimited controul; to extinguish the love of virtue, that vice and misery may be universally disseminated, and 'the image of God' reduced to an equality with the brutes that perish! Such, my dear Carolina, are the sublime reveries of modern philosophy!—the offspring of those vices, which

seek justification, and scorn repentance.

Pardon me, my dear girl, for repeating what you so well know. And do not think me a professed advocate for what is termed, 'the dignity of human nature.' One thing I am sure of: that, let metaphysicians say what they will, great part of our present importance depends on our ourselves; and, serious as the truth is, our future dignity or degradation will be determined by our own conduct.

Again pardon me, Carolina, for the length of this letter. The subject must be my excuse: it is your favourite theme; and you will receive it with hospitality, though it approach you in a very uncouth form. The effusions of the moment, I know, are always acceptable to my Carolina.—Adieu!

LETTER XXIX.

I HAD no sooner finished my last letter to you, than I indulged myself in a walk almost as far as the recess, under the row of elms that defend our little mansion from the chilling blasts of the east wind. I was alone: Albert had accompanied Theresa to the town, and Werter was not returned from the mountains. The evening was serene: there was that kind of stillness in the air, which inspires melancholy musings, and fills the mind with philosophic tranquility. The moon was rising, and by her wan lustre, discovered the grey mists slowly ascending from the lakes on my right hand; whilst the woody mountains on my left, were charmingly diversified with innumerable lights and shades. 'This scene,' I said to myself, 'this scene, dearest of mothers! is sacred to thee: under the shade of these elms, how

often have I been blessed with thy blessing! how often received the instructions of true wisdom! The remembrance of those endearing moments filled my eyes with tears: lifting them towards heaven, I could not help uttering aloud one of those spontaneous ejaculations of the heart which draw down blessings, and dissipate distress. My tears relieved me, and the recollection of having obeyed her sacred, her last commands, restored to my mind a melancholy tranquility.

Turning my eyes towards the mountains, I discovered a man approaching me in great haste. His head was uncovered, and he had the dry stalk of a weed in his hand: the moon shone on his face, and I saw it was the unfortunate Henry, whose passion for me had deprived him of reason*. I was extremely terrified; and he came with so

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* See Werter, Letter LXXI.

much precipitation, that it was impossible for me to escape, for I was at the upper end of the avenue. I, therefore, stood still. Poor wretch! I had no occasion to be alarmed; he knew me not; but, looking earnestly in my face, asked me, where his Charlotte was? 'She is not at home,' I said. 'I know that,' replied he, 'I looked all over the hills for her, and she is not there. She was with me last night, and then I shewed her the moon, and played upon this pipe; her eyes danced; it was on the high hill, and we talked to the moon. When the states pay me I shall buy the golden stars for my Charlotte.' He smiled as he uttered this. 'Go thy way home, Henry,' I said. He burst into tears, and I was afraid he recollected me. 'No,' said he, with a heavy sigh, and a faint voice, 'I am no Henry.' Folding his hands together, and again looking stedfastly in my face, whilst the tears ran down his own, he said, 'There is no Henry—Henry died

when the wind whistled in the great tree, and the white clouds took Charlotte to the stars.' He turned his eyes towards the sky, and never saw I so true a picture of settled melancholy: there was a wonderful expression of sadness in his countenance. 'Alas, poor youth,' I said, 'go home to thy mother.' He again looked at me with great earnestness, and in a kind of half whisper, said, 'These things must not be known to the princess; she will be angry when she knows Henry is dead, and there are no flowers—hush! the moon whispers to Charlotte; I must go.' Then, putting the forefinger of each hand to his lips, he stepped slowly away, as one walks across a room where others are asleep.

I saw him at a considerable distance, going in the same manner, till he entered the wood. The air grew cold, and the wind began to rise. I returned home with a mind full of melancholy reflections. Poor youth! may *he*,

who alone is able, restore thee to thyself, and give thee that sweet peace which forms the sovereign balm to all afflicted minds! Adieu, my dearest Carolina.

LETTER XXX.

YOUR heart bleeds, you say, for the wandering Henry ; and you complain, that in my last letter, I left you in a scene of exquisite distress. ‘ The poor wretch,’ you add, ‘ was entering the wood, when the air grew cold, and the wind began to rise ;’ and you are solicitous to know what became of him ; and the particulars of that unfortunate attachment which has reduced him to his present state of misery. You may be sure, that I should have sent somebody after him, had it been necessary ; but he is so well known all over this part of the country, that his wanderings are not attended with much danger. I never think of him but with extreme commiseration ; and had I, by any word or action, given him the least ray of hope, I should now be the most miserable of women.

He was my father's secretary, and discovered a turn for business and literature, that might have rendered him respectable to society, and happy in himself. He came very young into the family, and was not long before he was able to support his mother decently. He was mild in his disposition; of little conversation, and dedicated most of his leisure time to the classics. Albert discovered in him those qualities which my father disregarded, and accommodated him with books. He read Italian, and his favourite poet was Petrarch; a writer whose language fascinates, and whose images allure.

With an imagination thus stored, with feelings thus refined, and with a taste for the polite arts, it is no wonder that Henry, at eighteen, should be susceptible of the most delicate of all passions. Albert said, that Henry wanted nothing but a mistress to make him a poet: 'He has,' said Albert, 'all the materials in his composition; and when a spark from the brilliancy of some fe-

mule eye, has set them in a flame, we shall have German sonnets and elegies in abundance! But Albert was deceived; the passion operated differently on Henry. Instead of animating him to poetical flights, it plunged him into the depths of melancholy. Every one perceived the change in him, and every one assigned a different cause for it. He neglected his books; he shunned company; was frequently discovered in tears; and seemed to delight in nothing so much as rambling in the neighbouring woods. The general opinion was, that he had injured his intellects by too much application to study. In this state of mind, however, he did not neglect his duty: he went through the usual business of the day almost mechanically; for though he committed no errors, he did not appear to think of what he was doing. When asked the reason of his melancholy, he would seldom answer, but blushed extremely and found some excuse to get away.

As he lived with his mother, and only attended my father at certain hours, it was seldom that I saw him; but when I was told of the nature of his melancholy, and the particulars I have mentioned, I had no doubt of the cause of his complaint; and went privately to his mother, and informed her of my thoughts. She said, that it was impossible, from his conversation, to guess what it might be, but strongly suspected it was the effect of studious application; and had he been inclined to metaphysical enquiries, or abstract sciences, I should certainly have joined the general opinion. Besides, she added, that he had not, in any manner, discovered a partiality for any particular person. This shook my opinion considerably; and I returned home without being able to draw any certain conclusion.

Soon after this, my birth-day was kept, and, as was usual, all the family, of which Henry was reckoned a part, and many of the neighbours dined with

us. As there was something very mysterious in the distemperature of Henry, I was determined to observe him with attention; and to endeavour to make some discovery by oblique conversation. How I succeeded must form the subject of my next letter; for here I have scarcely room to add, with what sincerity and affection, I am yours.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



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